

FREQUENCY OF BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

Key Findings: Canada, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, United States

This indicator presents school principals' reports of both the incidence of behaviors that threaten a safe and orderly environment and their perceptions of these behaviors as a "serious" problem. It should be noted that what constitutes a "serious" problem may differ from one country to another. A relatively low number of threatening behaviors may be perceived as a "serious" problem in one country, but not in another, due to cultural differences and other factors.

In 1999, U.S. principals of schools that had eighth-grade students reported two behaviors most frequently that threaten a safe and orderly environment: classroom disturbances and intimidation or verbal abuse of other students. Sixty-nine percent of eighth-grade students were in schools whose principals reported at least a weekly occurrence of a classroom disturbance and 46 percent were in schools whose principals reported intimidation or verbal abuse (figure 14a).

While 69 percent of U.S. eighth-graders were in schools whose principals reported that classroom disturbances occurred at least weekly, only 11 percent were in schools whose principals reported these disturbances as a serious problem. This was also the case in Canada where 60 percent of eighth-graders were in schools whose principals reported at least a weekly disturbance and 21 percent were in schools where these were reported as a serious problem (figure 14b).

While a higher proportion of eighth-grade students in Japan were in schools whose principals reported that theft, vandalism, and cheating were serious problems, the incidence of these behaviors was still quite low. This was also the case with physical injury to other students and intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers.

Compared to U.S. eighth-graders, a higher percentage of Japanese students were in schools in which the principals perceived problems to be serious. Twenty-five percent of Japanese eighth-graders were in schools in which principals perceived that theft was a serious problem, 23 percent were in schools in which vandalism was perceived as a serious problem, and 13 percent were in schools in which cheating was perceived as a serious problem. The figures for the United States were 2 percent, 1 percent, and 1 percent, respectively. In addition, 22 percent of Japanese eighth-graders were in schools in which physical injury to other students was perceived as a serious problem and 25 percent were in schools in which intimidation or verbal abuse of other students was perceived as a serious problem, compared to the 3 percent and 16 percent, respectively, of U.S. students. Similarly, 23 percent of Japanese eighth-graders were in schools in which intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers was seen as a serious problem, compared to 3 percent of U.S. students.

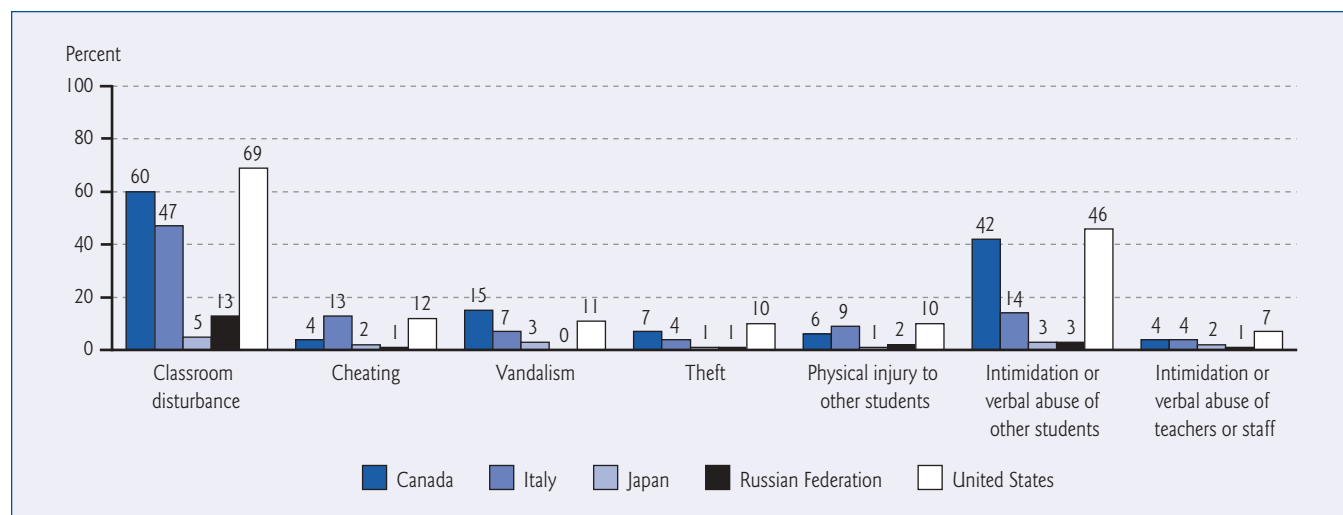
Definition and Methodology

The frequency and seriousness of student behavior threatening a safe school environment in 1999, based on the percentage of students whose schools reported that vandalism, theft, physical injury to other students, intimidation or verbal abuse of other students, and intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or staff "occur at least weekly" and are identified as a "serious problem."

Respondents were specifically asked the following question: "To what extent do these behaviors present a problem in your school? Check one box for Frequency and one box for Severity on each line." The behaviors specified in the question were: arriving late

at school; absenteeism (i.e., unjustified absences); skipping class hours/periods; violating dress code; classroom disturbance; cheating; profanity; vandalism; theft; intimidation or verbal abuse of other students; physical injury to other students; intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or staff; physical injury to teachers or staff; tobacco use/possession; alcohol use/possession; illegal drug use/possession; weapon use/possession; inappropriate sexual behavior. The periods for Frequency included: never; rarely; monthly; weekly; daily. The categories for Severity of the problem included: not a problem; minor problem; serious problem.

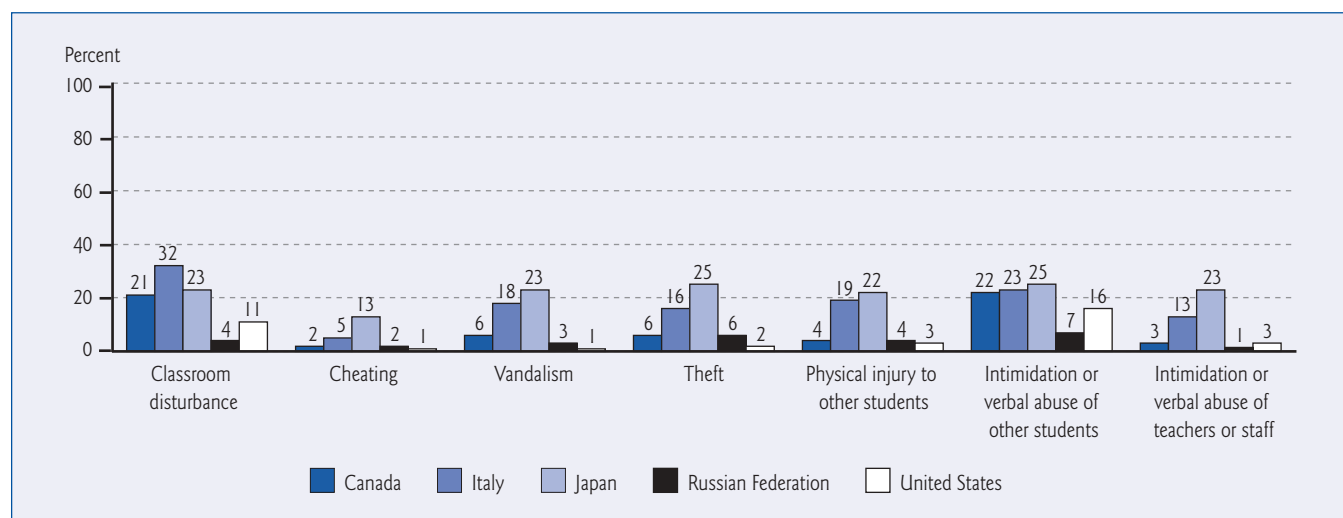
Figure 14a. Percentage of eighth-grade students whose principals reported that behavior threatening a safe and orderly environment occurs at least weekly, by selected behavior and country: 1999



NOTE: Response data for the United States are only available for 70-84 percent of students.

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, *TIMSS 1999 International Mathematics Report: Findings from IEA's Repeat of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study at the Eighth Grade, 2000*, Exhibits 7.7 and 7.8.

Figure 14b. Percentage of eighth-grade students whose principals reported that behavior threatening a safe and orderly environment is a serious problem, by selected behavior and country: 1999



NOTE: Response data for the United States are only available for 70-84 percent of students.

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, *TIMSS 1999 International Mathematics Report: Findings from IEA's Repeat of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study at the Eighth Grade, 2000*, Exhibits 7.7 and 7.8.

Frequency of Behavior Problems – Data Tables

Table A-14a. Percentage of eighth-grade students whose principals reported that behavior threatening a safe and orderly environment occurs at least weekly, by selected behavior and country: 1999

Country	Classroom disturbance	Cheating	Vandalism	Theft	Physical injury to other students
Canada	60 (2.6)	4 (1.4)	15 (1.5)	7 (1.4)	6 (1.8)
Italy	47 (4.0)	13 (2.7)	7 (1.9)	4 (1.4)	9 (2.1)
Japan	5 (1.5)	2 (1.1)	3 (1.3)	1 (0.9)	1 (0.9)
Russian Federation	13 (2.8)	1 (0.5)	0 (0.4)	1 (0.5)	2 (1.1)
United States *	69 (4.3)	12 (2.8)	11 (2.3)	10 (2.5)	10 (2.4)

Country	Intimidation or verbal abuse of other students	Intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or other staff
Canada	42 (3.0)	4 (1.2)
Italy	14 (2.3)	4 (1.7)
Japan	3 (1.5)	2 (1.2)
Russian Federation	3 (1.3)	1 (0.5)
United States *	46 (4.3)	7 (2.0)

*Response data available only for 70–84 percent of students.

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses.

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, *TIMSS 1999 International Mathematics Report: Findings from IEA's Repeat of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study at the Eighth Grade*, 2000, Exhibits 7.7 and 7.8.

Table A-14b. Percentage of eighth-grade students whose principals reported that behavior threatening a safe and orderly environment is a serious problem, by selected behavior and country: 1999

Country	Classroom disturbance	Cheating	Vandalism	Theft	Physical injury to other students
Canada	21 (2.3)	2 (0.9)	6 (2.0)	6 (1.9)	4 (1.5)
Italy	32 (3.6)	5 (1.4)	18 (2.8)	16 (2.8)	19 (3.0)
Japan	23 (3.7)	13 (2.8)	23 (3.5)	25 (3.7)	22 (3.6)
Russian Federation	4 (1.6)	2 (1.2)	3 (1.5)	6 (2.0)	4 (1.3)
United States *	11 (2.6)	1 (0.0)	1 (0.8)	2 (1.1)	3 (1.8)

Country	Intimidation or verbal abuse of other students	Intimidation or verbal abuse of teachers or other staff
Canada	22 (2.5)	3 (1.1)
Italy	23 (3.0)	13 (2.7)
Japan	25 (3.8)	23 (3.7)
Russian Federation	7 (2.1)	1 (0.6)
United States *	16 (3.6)	3 (1.5)

*Response data available only for 70–84 percent of students.

NOTE: Standard errors are in parentheses.

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, *TIMSS 1999 International Mathematics Report: Findings from IEA's Repeat of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study at the Eighth Grade*, 2000, Exhibits 7.7 and 7.8.